



## **GUIDE FOR CONDUCTION EFFECTIVE MEETINGS**

### **A GUIDE FOR THE LEPC**

Meetings are not usually very high on anyone's like-to-do list. Unfortunately, however, they seem to be an ever increasing part of our lives. This section of the LEPC handbook will offer some suggestions on how to conduct more productive meetings. We hope these ideas prove helpful. Use what works for you, ignore what doesn't, and add whatever improvement you care to.

#### **How to PITCH a Better Meeting**

PITCH is an acronym for this five step process for conduction better meetings.

- Plan
- Inform
- Target
- Contain
- Hasten

**PLAN** the meeting, being clear about:

1. The purpose of the meeting.
2. Agenda Items.
3. The desired outcome.
4. What arrangements need to be made.
5. How long the meeting will last.

**INFORM** meeting participants of:

1. The purpose of the meeting
2. Agenda Items.
3. The desired outcome.



4. Date, time and location.
5. Any previous assignments.

**TARGET** productive discussion by:

1. Stating and clarifying the purpose of the meeting.
2. Getting agreement on desired outcomes.
3. Allowing for modification of the agenda (including adding or deleting items, changing the order, or adjusting the times allocated).

**CONTAIN** the discussion to the agreed-upon agenda by:

1. Having someone in charge and someone to act as recorder.
2. Adhering to the agenda unless the group explicitly agrees to alter it.
3. Confronting behavior that diverts the group from attaining its desired outcomes.
4. Encouraging each LEPC member attending to participate fully.
5. Getting agreement on action steps, responsibilities and target dates.

**HASTEN** the completion of agreed-upon desired outcomes by:

1. Summarizing the meeting.
2. Recording the decisions that were made.
3. Recording the names of persons responsible for implementing action steps and the target dates.
4. Agreeing on a date for the next meeting
5. Evaluating every meeting and agreeing on ways to improve.
6. Editing and distributing minutes.
7. Putting unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.
8. Following up and encouraging task completion



9. Monitoring and evaluating the results achieved by the group.

### ROLE OF THE CHAIRMAN OR MEETING FACILITATOR

1. Summarize the last meeting.
2. Appoint a recorder.
3. Remind members of any commitments or agreements they make for this meeting.
4. Review and clarify the agenda if necessary.
5. Prioritize tasks if the agenda hasn't already done so.
6. Establish specific outcomes desired for this meeting.
7. Establish time frames for each task.
8. Keep members focused and on task.
9. Keep the meeting moving.

### KEEPING A MEETING GOING

The chairman or meeting leader should:

1. Keep the members on task.
2. Check for agreement or disagreement.
3. Track progress on the agenda.
4. Provide ongoing feedback to the group – summarize, paraphrase, restate frequently.
5. Protect against domination by a few individuals.
6. Call on silent members to participate.
7. Protect individuals from personal attack.



8. Suggest alternatives or options.
9. Surface conflicts.
10. Call for breaks.
11. Assist the recorder.

### THE ROLL OF THE RECORDER

The recorder is not the LEPC secretary. In fact, the secretary cannot perform both the duties of the secretary and recorder at the same time. The recorder keeps track of what is actually occurring during any given project or discussion period of the meeting. This information is recorded on flip charts and posted on the walls so the members can keep track of where they are and what still needs to be done.

#### Preparation:

1. Make sure of an adequate supply of flip chart pads, markers and masking tape.
2. Use two flip chart easels so you can move from a completed page to a fresh one without interruption.
3. Tear off small pieces of masking tape and attach them to the edge of the flip chart easel before the meeting to speed the posting of completed flip chart pages.

#### Execution:

1. Tell the members that, as recorder, you will record the substance of member contributions as you hear them and that you expect them to review what you've recorded for accuracy.
2. Ask for a volunteer to help you post completed pages.
3. Record the speaker's words, not your own.
4. Do not record names.
5. Write legibly but quickly so as not to dampen the group's energy. Don't print unless you print faster than you write.



6. If ideas come too fast, ask for help.
7. You may express ideas the same as any other member, but remain unobtrusive as the recorder.
8. Use different colored markers, arrows, numbers, stars, etc. to organize data and for different headings, emphasis, etc.
9. Use only commonly understood abbreviations.
10. When you summarize a long idea in key phrases, ask the speaker if you have accurately recorded the idea.

Completion:

1. Number each page to help keep completed sheets in order.
2. At the end of the meeting, compile and label the completed flip chart pages, and make sure they are safely stored and made available for the next meeting, if the project carries over into the next meeting.
3. Make sure the members agree on what will be done with the record once the project is complete. You may want to save it or you may want to discard it or make some other use of it.